



# City of Sunnyvale

## Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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**File #:** 20-0368, **Version:** 1

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Study Session Summary of February 25, 2020 - Fines Amnesty (2019 Study Issue)

**Call to Order:**

Vice Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**City Councilmembers Present:**

Mayor Larry Klein  
Vice Mayor Nancy Smith  
Councilmember Glenn Hendricks  
Councilmember Russ Melton  
Councilmember Michael S. Goldman  
Councilmember Mason Fong

**City Councilmembers Absent:**

Councilmember Gustav Larsson

**Study Session Summary:**

Cherise Brandell, Director of Library and Community Services and Ellen Giarrizzo, Circulation Manager delivered a presentation that discussed the options for elimination of fines on overdue library materials to remove barriers to library use.

Councilmembers asked questions and made the following comments:

- Fails to see connection between declining library usage and increasing balance of billed fees.
- Agrees with the purpose of having fines and fees; materials should be returned so others may use them.
- Consider lower cost fines and fees.
- Does not want to subsidize fine revenue losses by using the Service Level Set Aside.
- Would be interested in a one-year pilot program.
- Would want to review policies to determine the best way to waive fines and fees.
- How would we encourage patrons to return materials? We should have a caveat for patrons that don't return multiple materials.
- If we are unable to wipe fines and fees for all, let's do it for the children, they should have access to books.
- Framework policy should be in place to allow the Director of Library and Community Services to waive fines and fees, no need to come to Council.
- Is curious about removing fines (amnesty) for adults every three to five years.
- We should hire a consultant to run a fines amnesty program like other cities do.
- Supports the amnesty program to remove past fine debt.
- Agrees to amend schedule for fines but keep the fee schedule the way it is.
- Wants to eliminate all fines, not just for children.

- How would we envision piloting a year-long program?
- Are we requesting anything different than what other libraries have done?
- Likes the approach of taking the increase in revenue from Community Services class fees and using it to help with the loss of revenue offset.
- What percentage of disabled accounts are fine vs fee based?
- We should ask patrons for donations to go towards children's blocked accounts.

**Public Comment:**

Members of the public made the following comments:

- Is in favor of the study issue.
- Concerned about not billing patrons for expensive items.
- Fines and fees on unique collections vs printed books.

**Adjournment:**

Vice Mayor Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.